

# LIGHTS ON PLAY PRODUCTION



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# Lights on Play Production

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**A**LL ACTIVITIES concerned with the theater and the stage seem steeped in a mysterious glamour for the audience. There is no reason why participation in such a fascinating field should not be possible for everyone.

Producing a play is a challenging job. No worth-while production can be put on overnight. However, the fun of preparing and the satisfaction of starting from nothing and building to a successful performance are usually ample rewards. One well-done play stimulates the appetite of the players and the community for more plays of the same high entertainment value.

The material in this bulletin is simplified and intended primarily for one-act plays. It will be most valuable for amateur groups working with small stages, little equipment, and small budgets.

## HOW SHALL WE BEGIN?

Confronted with the problem of producing a play, we usually wonder how and where to begin. Among amateur groups presenting plays, all too frequently all duties except learning the dialogue are left to the director. Such a situation can only lead to confusion, and when the final curtain comes down, the group vows never to produce another play.

Much of this confusion can be avoided by setting up in advance a simple plan of organization which divides responsibilities and duties among the entire group. Such a plan is diagrammed on page 3.

Frequently it is necessary, even desirable, for one person to fill two or more of these positions. For instance, the same person might have charge of both costumes and makeup, or an actor with a small part might manage

properties or act as business manager, publicity agent, and take charge of the program. The important thing is to assign each position to a reliable person.

The responsibilities of the production staff are:

THE PLAY COMMITTEE selects the director who, working with the play committee, chooses the play. Although the director has the final decision in casting the play, this committee may well be consulted for advice. The committee and director select the production staff. Any policies concerning the production, such as price of admission or number of performances, are decided by the play committee.

THE DIRECTOR has final authority for the production throughout. It is his responsibility to supervise the work of all other members of the production staff. This does not mean that the director holds the role of a dic-

tator but rather that he leads, guides, and coordinates all activities toward the final goal of performance.

THE ACTORS are the human instruments by which the story of the drama is portrayed and told to the audience. In the final analysis, the success of the play depends upon the actors. See page 8 for their responsibilities.

THE PROMPTER attends all rehearsals to become well acquainted with the script, action, entrance cues, etc. He follows the script and calls attention to incorrect action and cues, signals for off-stage noises and light changes, and gives signal for curtain.

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR works in close cooperation with the director and supervises the mechanical part of the production: scenery, lighting, costumes, properties, and makeup. During performances he supervises all activities backstage, pulls the curtain, takes care of sound effects, and sees that actors make entrances on time.

THE SCENERY MANAGER designs, builds, paints, or otherwise obtains scenery for the production. During performances the scenery manager, assisted by his helpers, puts up the scenery and makes any scenery changes during the play. Scenery should be ready at an early date so that the actors will learn to fit their move-

ments to the size of the stage, exits, and entrances.

THE LIGHTING MANAGER obtains, makes if necessary, and places all instruments where they may be used to best advantage, and operates all lighting equipment. It is important that the lighting, scenery, and costume managers cooperate closely in their plans.

THE COSTUME MANAGER is responsible for either making the costumes or securing them from local sources or rental houses. He takes care of all costume repair during performances.

THE PROPERTY MAN is responsible for all properties except scenery, costumes, and personal articles. The latter are usually furnished by the actors. It is his duty to see that all properties are in place on the stage before the curtain goes up and to take care of all properties during rehearsals or performances. Since many of the properties will be borrowed, extreme care must be taken of them and they should be returned promptly.

THE MAKEUP DIRECTOR checks upon makeup supplies in advance to be certain all necessary articles are present. Makeup for each actor should be tried several times before the final performance to check on effectiveness and the effect of lights.

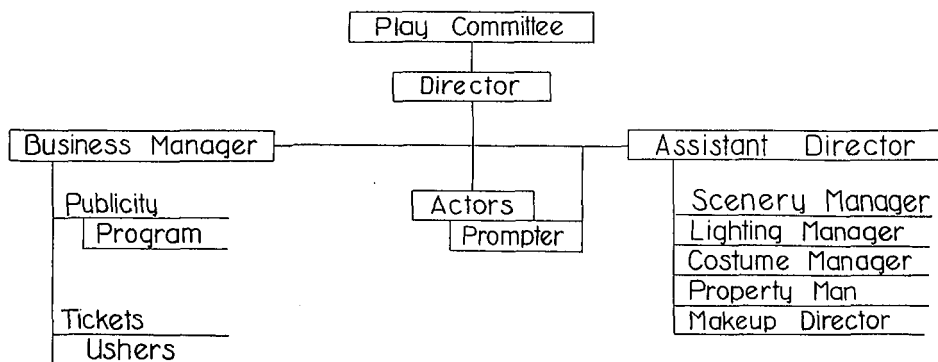


FIG. 1. PLAN FOR ORGANIZATION OF PLAY

THE BUSINESS MANAGER takes charge of all financial duties, such as ticket sales, payment of bills after approval by the play committee, rental of the theater or hall, and keeping an accurate account of all money spent and received. The publicity director, program committee, ticket sales crew, and ushers all work under the business manager's direction.

THE PUBLICITY DIRECTOR's responsibility is to let the public know about

the play and make them want to see it. Publicity arrangements should begin early. Newspaper stories and advertisements, posters, announcements at meetings, and publicity stunts are methods of attracting public interest.

THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN is responsible for preparing a copy of the program and having this printed or mimeographed. Recognition should be given to all organizations or individuals that assist in the production.

## *What Play Shall We Select?*

CAREFUL consideration should be given to the selection of a play. After reading each play, the play committee and director should ask themselves the following questions:

*Does the play tell a story?* The play must hold the attention of the audience throughout. To accomplish this the story must show conflict between people or situations. For example, a father with limited finances is in conflict with members of his family who are interested in acquiring recognition in the social world; or a family which is uprooted from its normal way of life is brought into conflict with a new form of government, war, or disaster of any type. The conflict must be apparent if it is to maintain interest.

*Will the audience enjoy it?* The audience likes to be entertained by the play. Consider the age, occupation, and previous dramatic experience of the audience. Over a period of years, in order to develop appreciation and stimulate interest, vary productions between comedies, mysteries, serious plays, and modern and historical plays.

*Can a cast be secured?* The number of people able to take part, their ages, and their acting experience must be considered. Select plays which are within the understanding and ability of the actors but which will challenge them and give satisfaction.

*Will the cast like the play?* A play which is not liked by the entire producing group is likely to be a poor production.

*Are stage facilities and equipment adequate?* The size of the stage and the available scenery, properties, and lighting equipment will influence the selection of the play.

*Is the budget adequate?* Cost of materials for building scenery, costumes, makeup supplies, and other items will vary with the play. A royalty fee must be paid to the copyright owner for the use of some plays. This fee must be paid before the play is given.

A list of one-act plays is available in the County Extension Office. From this descriptive list, copies may be ordered for reading purposes from the Agricultural Extension Service, University Farm, St. Paul.





FIG. 2. SCENE FROM "LITTLE WOMEN"

This play is a good selection for groups who have few male actors to take part.

## *What Are the Director's Duties?*

**T**HE DIRECTOR must organize the whole play to bring to life on the stage a story from the printed page. In order to accomplish this, he must first thoroughly understand the play. Every play has at least one major conflict and usually several minor conflicts. Having determined these major and minor points, the director must decide how each can be emphasized most effectively.

The director must establish a stage atmosphere which will harmonize with the story to be told; thus a gay comedy should have a cheerful, colorful stage setting, and the action should be such that the audience will immediately feel this gayety.

With a clear understanding of what he hopes to accomplish, the director's next step is to plan the arrangement of the stage. He usually draws a diagram which shows the placement of doors, windows, and all other exits in the set and the position of the important pieces of furniture. The director should never consider the stage directions found in the script as final for often play directions are prepared for some specific stage with little regard for variations of stages or equipment.

Next the director must plan the movements and stage positions of the actors during each scene. Factors which determine these positions are: first, visibility to the audience. Keep

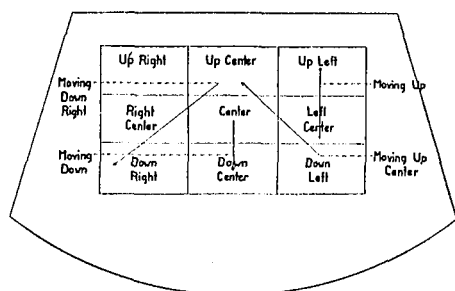


FIG. 3. STAGE AREAS

Both the director and actors should know the names of these stage areas.

the actors out from behind each other and well into the visible acting area. Second, the action must be the logical result of the thoughts and feelings which the actor wishes to express.

Stage position and movement is also a means of placing emphasis on important lines or important characters. A person in motion is more emphatic than one who is stationary. When a single person is on the stage he gains more importance by playing down-stage. When two or more people are conversing on the stage, the one standing up-stage receives greater emphasis since the actor standing down-stage must talk back (away from the audience) to him.

The director is now ready to work with the actor. Selection of the cast is most commonly done by the "try-out" method. It is wise to announce that the first casting is temporary to allow for necessary changes.

As each actor reads the lines, the director must judge his performance with certain qualifications in mind. The following should be considered:

**Dependability.**—An inexperienced actor who is willing to work conscientiously and to attend all rehearsals is more valuable than a star who can-

not be depended upon and who "knows more than the director."

**Appearance.**—Can he be "made-up" for the part? Will he be too large or small compared with the other actors?

**Voice.**—Is his voice quality and tone pleasing? Is the actor's voice loud and distinct enough to be heard throughout the auditorium?

**Imagination.**—Does the actor interpret his lines correctly? Will he be able to build the part into a convincing characterization? Can he adjust his walk, movements, and carriage to fit the part?

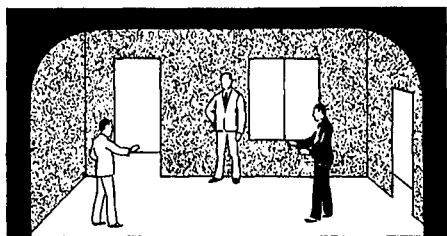
**Acting experience.**—Stage ability and poise increase with experience. It is sometimes safer to give the most difficult parts to individuals who have had experience and to train inexperienced actors through smaller parts.

When the cast is selected, a schedule of rehearsals should be announced. At the first rehearsal the cast takes its place on the stage. As they read through their lines the director will indicate the general stage movements.

The director must work with the actor in helping him to understand why he makes certain statements and why he moves on the stage. For example, if John makes a statement, "I am going home," he must know the "why" of this statement. Is he angry or is he overjoyed with the thought of returning to his boyhood home? If it is anger he will emphasize the emotions of anger by his facial expression, tone of voice, speed in which he speaks, bodily posture, and actions. With this procedure the actor learns his lines as the rehearsals progress.

The next emphasis in rehearsals is upon characterization. This includes gestures, emphasis of important lines, vocalization, expression, the proper way to stand and sit—everything

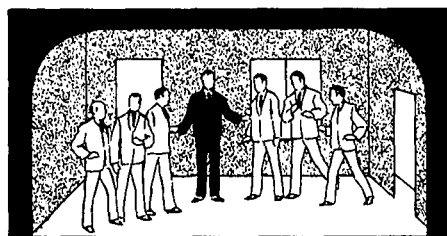
## Incorrect



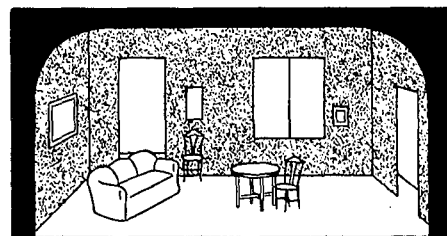
Man upstage dominates stage instead of main character.



Both men receive equal attention and have equal importance.

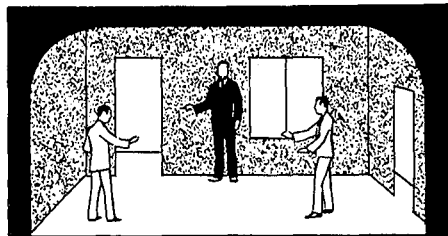


Uninteresting grouping of figures in straight line. Main character does not dominate scene.

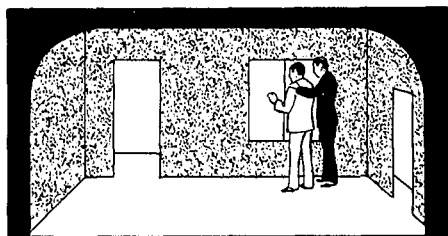


Right side of stage too heavy to balance left side. Pictures incorrectly hung.

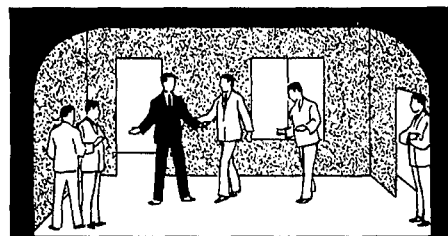
## Correct



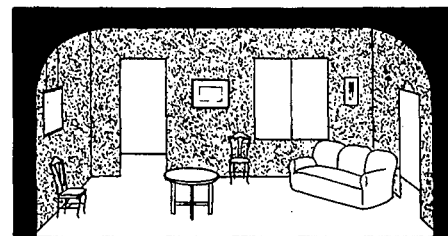
Minor actors talk upstage to most important character.



Most important character dominates the other actor.



Minor actors center attention on main character by standing further away and downstage from him.



Davenport up left balances table and chair down right and stage appears well-balanced.

FIG. 4. STAGE POSITION OF ACTORS AND FURNITURE

The left hand column shows the incorrect positions and the right hand column the correct positions. The dark figure in each diagram represents the most important character in the scene.

which is necessary to give a convincing characterization.

In polishing the play absolute teamwork is essential among all members of the production staff. This is the period in which the final touches are being put on all details of the play, the set, lighting effects, costumes, and properties, and all must reach the deadline of dress rehearsals simultaneously.

The director must knit the play into a complete whole. Action must move

rapidly enough to hold audience attention and yet slowly enough so that the audience will not miss any of the important parts of the story. The play must build up suspense to the climax or solution of the main conflict.

Dress rehearsals before the night of public performance are valuable in giving members of the production crew and cast experience in shifting and manipulating their materials as well as developing assurance and poise among the actors.

## *What Are the Actors' Responsibilities?*

IN A PLAY, the actors, like the players in a football game, reap most of the glory since they are the center of audience attention. Therefore, a large share of the responsibility falls upon all of them, regardless of the role they play. The actor's first duty lies in cooperation with the director as well as with other cast members and the production staff. This includes getting to rehearsals on time, learning lines together with action and movement, and maintaining a businesslike attitude toward rehearsals.

Each actor will want to know as much as possible about the character he portrays, such as age, nationality, occupation, and eccentricities. Personality traits not explained by the playwright must be supplied from his own imagination or from the director.

The actor must next experiment with the speaking of his lines until he can express the thought and information which he wishes to convey. At all times, he must sincerely believe in the reality of his make-believe part.

Occasionally the amateur actor will try to overact his part and would be much more successful if he spoke and acted naturally. The natural inflections and pronunciations of the everyday speaking voice are preferable to distorted broad "A's" and incorrect dialects.

Good acting can be tested by the following three questions: Does the actor bring something fresh and individual into his part? Is his portrayal consistent throughout? Is his characterization convincing?

A last rule for the actor is to be resourceful. A valuable actor is one who keeps a cool head at all times and can come through any disastrous or unexpected situation with flying colors. If someone misses a cue, do something. If someone fails to appear, go on talking. Whatever happens, say something or do something to cover up the error. If audience laughter interrupts a speech the actor should pause until it subsides enough so that he may be heard easily.



## *What Are the Staging Problems?*

**E**VERY PLAY must have a background against which the story is told. This may vary from a realistic setting which includes all details to a simple background which shows no details. A realistic setting should set the location of the play, tell what type of people live there, and help portray the mood or spirit of the play. The set, pieces of furniture, and other accessories duplicate reality in detail.

A second type of stage gives only an illusion of the place of action by a careful selection of a few items such as entrances and exits, and a minimum number of furniture pieces. For example, openings in draperies may indicate doors.

The simplest type of stage setting, which shows no detail, may be made of drapes, screens, groupings of trees, or fences and provides a background against which the play is shown. Indoor and out-of-door pageants, old classic productions, and a few modern plays often use this type of background. With this type of setting the entire story must be told by the action and lines of the players without the influence of the background. All types of stage settings may be effective.

In general, scenery effects are most commonly produced by draperies or by stage flats. Draperies are flexible, easy to store, and simple to construct. Materials used for drapes may range from inexpensive, rough-surfaced fabrics, such as rep, to velour, which is more expensive but ideal. Window and door units may be inserted into the drapes.

Stage flats are standing units which are made from light wooden frames covered with canvas or muslin. These

units are fastened together and doors and windows inserted. Variations may be produced by rearranging the flats, and color schemes can be changed easily by repainting.

Construction of stage flats is not difficult. These flats are portable and would be a real addition to the stage of a community building, school, or church. The effort and expenditure for such a cooperative endeavor would not only make it possible to produce a wider variety of plays but also develop community interest in drama. Material giving specific information on making draperies, stage flat construction, and painting is available upon request from the Agricultural Extension Service, University Farm, St. Paul. In requesting information on draperies be sure to include dimensions of stage floor and height of stage as well as what lighting equipment will be used with the drapes, and the amount of money your group plans to spend.

Properties should be kept to a minimum. A few pieces of furniture well-chosen are better than a stage cluttered with unnecessary articles.

### **LIGHTING**

The effectiveness of a play can be increased by good lighting. Lighting illuminates the stage so that the setting and action are more visible to the audience. By varying the amount and type of light the season, weather, and time of day can be indicated.

Light creates highlights and shadows giving a feeling of depth to the stage set so that the actors and furnishings stand out in relief rather than appearing like flat figures in a pic-

ture frame. The center of interest is emphasized by a greater illumination of that portion of the stage. The audience will center attention on the most brilliantly lighted and most colorful part of the stage.

Lighting equipment may vary from highly expensive instruments to relatively simple home-made equipment. Some of the stages in use today are equipped with permanent footlights and hanging border lights. Such lighting systems are satisfactory if a large number of dimmers are available. For the stage with little or no equipment, lighting instruments which have greater flexibility are usually more satisfactory. Such equipment may be purchased or inexpensively constructed.

### Strip Lights

Strip lights can be used as border lights (hung above the stage) or as portable footlights to give general illumination. They may be placed at the back or sides of the stage or wherever desired to light a specific area.

Strip lights may be constructed with 1"x4" lumber, sockets, wire and plug, and lamps. For compartment strip lights (Fig. 5) use 100-150 watt bulbs. Paint the inside of the compartments with a flat white paint to form a reflecting surface. Units about three feet long are most satisfactory.

### Flood Lights

Flood lights may be used for general illumination or to light some specific area of the stage. Flood lights will light a larger area than spot lights, but they lack the high intensity. They are placed at the sides or back of the stage or hung from above the stage.

The home-made flood light shown in figure 6 is made from a gallon oil can which has been cut and bent as shown in the diagram. Leave the inside of the can shiny to form a reflecting surface. A similar light can be built from plywood, with the interior of the box painted white. Be sure to make ventilation holes, preferably in top and bottom of the can. Use a high wattage bulb, 500 to 1000 watt. A sheet of colored gelatin or transpara placed in the wooden color frame will produce colored light. Flood lights can be placed on a stand or hung from the top of the can as shown.

### Spotlights

Spotlights are used to pick out and accent specific areas or characters. The baby spot, smaller than the regular spot, is most practical for small stages. Spotlights may be placed above the stage, on the ceiling above the audience and tilted to shine on the stage, at the sides or back of the stage, or even on the floor.

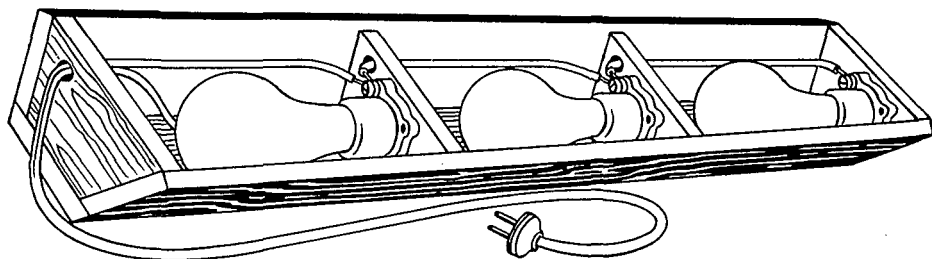


FIG. 5. HOME-MADE COMPARTMENT STRIP LIGHTS

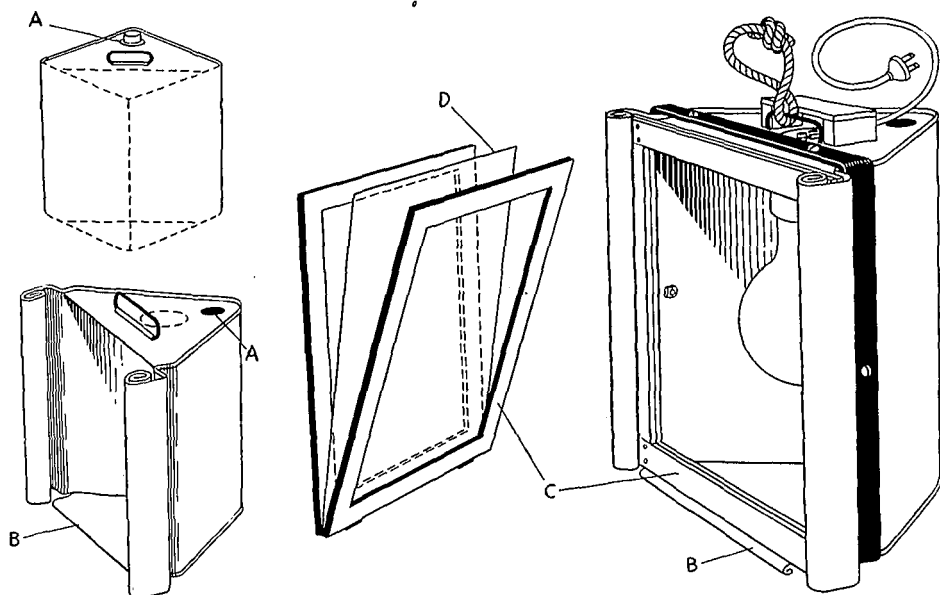


FIG. 6. FLOOD LIGHT MADE FROM FIVE-GALLON OIL CAN

- A. Pouring spout used for ventilation hole.  
 B. Bottom of can folded back, forming a base upon which the color frame rests.  
 C. Two flat frames hinged on one end make a wooden color frame. Insert color sheet, close frames, and place in frame as shown.  
 D. Sheet of colored gelatin or transpara used as color sheet.

A simple spotlight can be made from a long tin can. The lamp socket is mounted at the closed end of the can.

### Colored Lights

Colored lights may be secured by covering light-instrument openings with sheets of gelatin or transpara, which may be purchased at costume houses or theatrical supply companies. Cellophane is not recommended because it crinkles and cracks under the heat of the lamp and is highly inflammable. Colored lamp dip, colored paint which allows light to shine through it, is sometimes used, but this quickly burns off the bulbs.

Colored lights may add much to the stage picture. However, it will be necessary for the lighting technician to experiment carefully in order to

secure the desired effect. Colored light will produce changes in colors of costumes, scenery, and makeup.

The color produced should harmonize with the spirit of the play. Colors generally give the following emotional effects:

*Red.*—Excitement, war, tragedy.

*Amber.*—Stimulating warm color, feeling of contentment and happiness.

*Yellow.*—Cheering effect.

*Blue.*—Dignity, coldness, melancholy.

*Violet.*—Sadness, sentimentality, suffering.

With all lighting equipment, either commercial or home-made, care must be taken to insure that circuits are not overloaded and that all connections are secure and well-covered as the possibility of fire is particularly dangerous with the many highly inflammable stage materials.

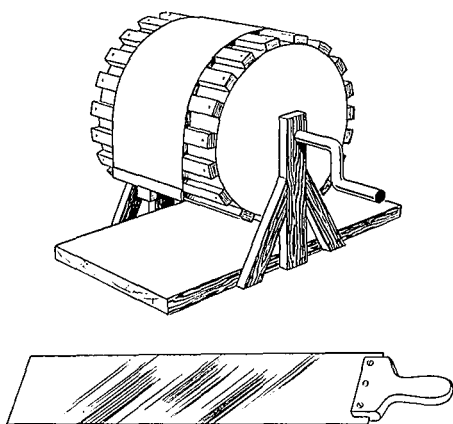


FIG. 7. WIND MACHINE (ABOVE), THUNDER INSTRUMENT (BELOW)

### SOUND EFFECTS

Almost every play calls for some special sound effects. These can often be achieved with a minimum amount of material and a little ingenuity.

The simplest way to produce lightning is to turn a light off and on rapidly to produce flashes. A vacuum cleaner

and auto horns can be used to indicate the arrival or passing of automobiles. Hitting the hollow halves of a coconut shell on a table top or flat surface produces the sound of horses' hoof beats.

The most common method of duplicating the sound of wind is with the wind machine, diagrammed in figure 7. The hollow cylinder is made by nailing slats to circular end boards. The cylinder may range from  $1\frac{1}{2}'$  to  $2'$  in diameter or slightly smaller. One end of a strip of canvas is attached to the base board or a stationary brace. The other end of the canvas is left free. By turning the cylinder the sound of wind is made as the canvas slides against the slats. The sound of rain can be made by placing pebbles inside this cylinder, which has been lined with cardboard or plywood, or in a box and then shaking the box.

An effect of thunder may be produced by shaking the tin thunder instrument diagrammed. A large tomato can, when cut open, will furnish tin.

## *What Are the Makeup Problems?*

**M**AKEUP has two fundamental purposes: to make one look like oneself or to make one look like someone else. The first is called "straight" makeup and emphasizes the normal features and counteracts the washed-out, flat look that bright stage lights give the face. The second is known as "character" makeup. Nearly every play requires character portrayal, and proper makeup aids the actor in interpreting the role and the audience in forgetting the actor's real identity.

The makeup director will probably find it necessary to experiment with various makeups before he finds one

which suits and fits each actor. Each makeup should be tried out under the lighting conditions to be used. The amount of makeup used depends upon the stage lighting; the brighter the lights the more makeup needed. A safe rule for amateurs is "Better too little makeup than too much."

### STRAIGHT MAKEUP

1. Wash face with soap and water and dry thoroughly. If using stick grease paint, clean face with cold cream and remove surplus, leaving thin film of cream on face.

2. Apply foundation. Spread thinly and smoothly over face, ears, and blend into neck at collar line. Use shade which agrees with age and sex of character, usually light pink shade for women and darker shades for men.

3. Apply moist rouge to cheeks. Rouge prominent part of cheeks, avoiding hollows. Blend edges well into base or foundation.

4. Shade upper eyelid with liner which blends with the color of eyes. Blend to eyebrow and beyond outer corner of the eye. A dot of red may be placed at inner corner of the eye for a young girl's makeup.

5. Draw a thin line below lower eyelashes and very close to them. Use brown liner for blondes and brunettes, black for extreme brunettes.

6. Apply brown mascara to eyebrows and lashes.

7. Apply moist rouge or lipstick to lips. Do not carry to corners of mouth. Use very dark lipstick for men and keep the lip line thin.

8. Pat powder over face. Brush off excess with baby brush or rabbit's foot.

### CHARACTER MAKEUP

Faces may be made to look older or younger. The facial expression and features may be made to look completely different through the use of makeup. Some of this change is caused by the use of different foundation colors, but much of it is an illusion created by the use of highlights and shadows. A highlight is a patch of light which stands out in contrast with a dark or shaded area. Highlights are used to give prominence or shape to the nose, cheeks, chin, and wrinkles.



FIG. 8. HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE FACE ON THE LEFT, SHOWING HOW THE FORM AND CONTOUR OF THE FACE MAY BE ALTERED



To highlight features, use a lighter shade of makeup than the foundation color on the rest of the face. White liner may be used for extreme highlighting. To make shadows, use a color darker than the makeup base. In special character makeup, shadows are used to produce sunken features by blending them with highlights.

### Old Age Makeup

Use sallow grease paint foundation. This can be purchased or made by mixing yellow and pink foundation to-

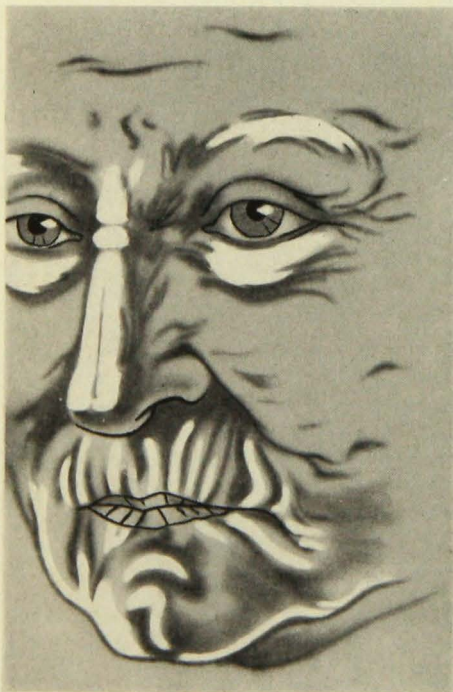


FIG. 9. OLD AGE MAKEUP

Crow's-feet are drawn in with dark liner. To create puffy effect under eyes, blend dark shadow immediately under lower lid, highlight with white, and shadow lower edge of highlight. Nose is highlighted to give bony appearance and brows whitened with white mascara. Wrinkled mouth and chin are achieved by drawing vertical lines with dark liner and paralleling this with white highlights.

gether. With a mixture combining red and brown or blue liners, or dark grey liner, apply shadows around the eyes, temples, at base of nose, hollows of cheeks, below the lower lip, and the neck. Trace the natural face lines and wrinkles with a lining brush, using the same color of liner as used for shadows. Highlight each wrinkle by sketching alongside of it another line in white. Blend the edges of the two lines with little finger.

Eyebrows and temples are whitened with white mascara and the rest of the hair whitened with cornstarch. Powder carefully so lines are not smudged. Be sure to make up hands and arms, outlining veins with dark blue liner.

### Middle Age Makeup

Use same grease paints as for straight makeup. Shadow cheeks, temples, and nose very lightly. Put in a few wrinkles in forehead, around eyes, and laugh wrinkles around mouth. Gray hair at the temples only. Use very little rouge, placed rather low down on cheeks. Make up eyes and lips as for straight makeup.

### Additional Makeup Suggestions

**Beards.**—Crepe hair may be purchased from costume houses and at some drug stores. Cut off the desired amount of hair, then soak it in water and hang it up to dry. Place a weight on the end of the hair as it dries because this will pull out the kinks in the hair. Comb hair before applying. Apply spirit gum to face where beard naturally grows. Taking a few strands at a time, trim the edges and apply ends to gummed face. Press hair firmly to face with a towel and when spirit gum is dry, comb and trim beard or mustache to desired shape. Be sure to





FIG. 10. HOW MAKEUP CHANGES THE CHARACTER OF EYES

(Left) Normal eyes defined by shading.

(Center) Eyes are enlarged by outlining lids beyond the corners.

(Right) Placement of age lines and crow's-feet.

attach hair in the direction it grows naturally. Mustaches grow up and down, not out to the sides.

**Eyes.**—The eyes are one of the most expressive features of the face. The shape, the color, the setting of the eyes, the eyebrows—all indicate types of personality. See figure 10.

**To Change Shape of Nose.**—Shape of nose can be altered by the use of white liner. To make a thin nose appear broad, draw a *wide* white line from the bridge of the nose to the tip. If a nose is to appear thin, draw a *narrow* white line down the nose. To crook a normally straight nose, draw the white line with the desired "crooks." If an extremely distorted nose is desired, it should be altered with nose putty.

**Scars.**—Realistic scars can be made by painting in the scar with non-flexible collodion and letting it dry. Repaint the scar again if it is not deep enough with the first application.

**Teeth.**—Black tooth enamel or black wax will block out teeth.

### Makeup Materials

Cold cream for removing makeup.

Dry rouge, light and dark; use after powder has been applied.

Foundation sticks: light pink, dark pink, tan, white.

Face powder: pale pink, dark pink, yellow.

Liners: brown, light red, dark

maroon, black, blue, purple, yellow, grey.

Lining brush.

Mascara: white and brown.

Moist rouge: light and dark.

Powder puff. Cleansing tissue.

Baby brush or rabbit's foot.

Crepe hair: blonde, light brown, dark brown, red, grey.

Spirit gum. Collodion. Nose putty.

### COSTUMES

When planning either a single costume or costuming for a group, it is important to remember that everything must be in keeping with the period and character of the play.

The costume director must consider the color harmony and contrast of the costumes in each scene with each other and with stage set as well as decide on each garment's material and style.

It is unnecessary to buy the most expensive materials when making costumes. Good neutral materials that can be dyed, stripped, and dyed again are better than cheap materials which can only be used once. Unbleached muslins, ginghams, flannels, and rayons are inexpensive and dye well.

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## *Values of Dramatic Activities*

A SATISFYING AND STIMULATING LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITY is essential for all. Just as certain amounts of rest, work, and food are necessary to living, so play and recreational activities are needed in a balanced life. Participation in dramatics not only gives immediate pleasure and happiness but also challenges the individual or group to continue on to higher levels of achievement.

LEARNING TO WORK TOGETHER IN A GROUP ENTERPRISE is a requisite for democratic living. All the forces in modern life tend to break down the bonds which formerly united neighborhood and community groups. Playing together is one avenue by which community cooperation can be developed, for a successful play is the result of the united effort of many individuals and not that of a single person.

THE TALENTS OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL ARE CHALLENGED, for the production of a play demands a wide variety of skills and abilities. Whether the individual is interested in acting, costume design and construction, working with lighting equipment, publicity, music, dance, carpentry, painting, or any other of the activities necessary to a play production, he can find something which he likes and wants to do.

THE ECONOMY OF HOME TALENT ENTERTAINMENT cannot be overlooked. Participants in the play not only find this activity an inexpensive recreational pleasure, but the entire community is able to enjoy and develop an appreciation of drama at a low cost.

THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTISTIC APPRECIATION rural people are realizing that they can build and enjoy a rich and distinctive culture of their own. Dramatic activities are one means of cultivating and developing this culture.

UNIVERSITY FARM, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

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